



Media Advisory

Anniston Chemical Agent Disposal Facility

Michael B. Abrams
Anniston Chemical Agent Disposal Facility
3580 Morrisville Road
Anniston, AL 36201
(256) 238-1652, Ext. 235

Donavan A. Mager
Westinghouse Anniston
3580 Morrisville Road
Anniston, AL 36201
(256) 238-0721, Ext. 137

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ANCDF Laboratory Confirms Isolated Chemical Alarm

ANNISTON ARMY DEPOT, Ala. – A chemical agent monitor, known as an Automatic Continuous Air Monitoring System (ACAMS) in the Anniston Chemical Agent Disposal Facility (ANCDF) chemical laboratory sounded early this morning. The monitor alarm signaled the possible presence of nerve agent GB in an unoccupied room inside the laboratory. The agent alarm subsequently cleared a short time later indicating any trace of agent had disappeared.

Employees inside the laboratory at the time of the alarm were not injured. “The laboratory has a negative air pressure system, ventilated hood work areas, and other safety designs to protect the workers, the community, and the environment,” said laboratory chief Dr. Robert L. Kelly.

“A back up system, called the Depot Area Alarm Monitoring System or DAAMS, confirmed that the ACAMS had detected nerve agent GB in the lab’s equipment repair room,” Kelly said. “The analysis showed that the agent level was below the standard that has been set to ensure the safety of our workers.

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“We are now investigating the incident to determine what happened so we can prevent this from recurring,” Kelly continued.

The room that was monitored is used to repair ACAMS. There is no known source of GB in the room. The laboratory is a separate building and there is no direct connection between it and the Munitions Demilitarization Building where chemical weapons are destroyed.

“The agent reading was very low and did not pose any risk to our workers, the community, or the environment,” said Timothy K. Garrett, the government site project manager.

“We realize this agent detection was at an extremely low level, well below worker safety standards,” Garrett said. “However, I know positive alarms, regardless how small, are of keen interest. So we are voluntarily announcing that an alarm sounded at 1:15 this morning in an effort to let everyone know and to counter any possible rumors.

“Our monitoring equipment is very responsive in providing early warning at extremely low levels. I feel it is important that people understand how safe working conditions are at the ANCDF. And I feel a personal commitment to community leaders and residents to let them know when something out of the ordinary occurs,” explained Garrett.

“I am very impressed with the professional and immediate response the laboratory employees and the rest of the ANCDF team made when the alarm sounded,” Garrett said. “Team training and our unwavering commitment to follow established safety procedures ensures we will accomplish our mission of safely destroying the Anniston stockpile without causing any harm to the community or the environment.”

The laboratory alarm did not stop ANCDF operations today. The ANCDF is in the Agent Trial Burn phase of operations. A deactivation furnace mini-burn went well and should provide valuable information for the upcoming deactivation furnace agent trial burn. Additional deactivation furnace mini-burns are scheduled. The first liquid incinerator agent trial burn began this morning and was completed early this afternoon.

Anniston Chemical Materials Agency employees processed 403 rockets and 105 gallons of GB as of midnight Nov. 6. Since the first two M55 rockets with nerve agent GB were destroyed on August 9, a total of **10,751 rockets** and **11,339 gallons** of liquid GB have been safely destroyed.

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Questions?: Please call:

Michael B. Abrams, ANCDF PAO, at 256-238-1652, Ext. 235 (Cell – 256-453-3840)

Donavan A. Mager, WA PAO, at 256-238-0721, Ext. 137

Charles F. Steele, Jr., Outreach Office Manager, at 256-238-0120